1: Meek E, G-5 (1925-1930) 1931
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Teeth are not filed or chipped, and there is no piercing of the nasal septum. But women wear lip and ear ornaments. The lips are pierced with a needle at about the age of seven, and a lip plug is inserted, fashioned from the thorn of the *fasakwari* tree. It is a cylindrical disc with a flange. The front of the disc is hollowed out and a bead inserted. The discs of grown-up women are about the size of a shilling. The ears are pierced at the age of five and rings of tin inserted. Men also wear earrings in the left ear, but among some families (e.g. the Bobai family of Fakan) earrings are taboo for some reason I was unable to discover.

Men and women both wear iron rings and girdles of brass wire of European manufacture. Bracelets of brass and iron are also worn by both sexes. Women and lads frequently, especially for dances, streak their faces with a black pigment obtained from the dried seeds of an acacia tree. Women also smear their bodies with red earth mixed with mahogany oil. The earth is obtained in a river bed and is reduced to a powder by being burned in a fire of dried cow's dung. The red earth may be a means of protecting the body from the actinic rays of the sun, but it appears also to have some religious significance, as warriors in former times were wont to streak with red earth their faces and also the heads of captured enemies.

All men of the Katab now wear small cloth loin-coverings, the flap passing through the legs from front to rear. But in former times the triangular loin-cloth covering was the rule. Important men also, nowadays, wear a cloth thrown round the body and over the left shoulder. Many, too, wear gowns. For priests the use of cloth is taboo. They wear a triangular loin-covering of leather and over the shoulders a cape of cob-skin, the skin of the animal's forelegs being sewn together to serve as fasteners. The inside of the skin is cured with acacia leaves, the use of wood ashes and paw-paw leaves being avoided in order that the outside hair may be left intact. This was the pristine clothing for all males, and it is noteworthy that even to this day, among the Kagoro, no one may enter a religious shrine wearing garments made of cloth. In wet weather men wear head and shoulder coverings of plaited grass. Girls go about nude until the age of five, and then, up to the age of ten, affect a small apron of cowry shells which jingle with every

Women of all sections of the Katab tribe also wear a stud or plug (about half-an-inch in diameter and length) in the upper lip. This is not an uncommon feature in Nigeria, but is not found among immediately adjacent peoples, so far as can be determined, and so effectively sets off members of the Katab Group from their neighbours all around.

As distinctive as the *oyam*, though surprisingly neglected by Meek in his definition of the Katab culture-complex, is the massive head-board or tray on which women of the Katab Group carry their loads: this is of unusual size, often a yard long and half as wide, and ovoid (or an elongated octagon) in shape: it is carved of a light-weight wood, flat, with a low rim, sometimes decorated with incised geometrical (rarely, stylized but realistic animal) figures, and invariably stained with red ochre. Meek notes that among the Katab proper a mother delivers her child on her head-board which "thereafter bears a semi-sacred character." The precise distribution of this article cannot be determined, but it does not appear to be used outside the area now occupied by the Katab Group.[7]

The dress of men of the Katab Group does not seem to be distinctive in any particular detail. The traditional garb appears to have been a skin loin-covering, and elders were distinguished by a skin across the shoulders. To-day, cloth is commonly used in place of skin; Hausa-Fulani caps, particularly the *fula*, and gowns, even the *riga*, may be worn by elders in civil occupations. But the priests maintain traditional styles, and all cloth is cast off at religious observances. There is some evidence that certain members of the Group,[8] if not all, wear the penis-sheath—an item virtually universal among tribes immediately to the east and south, in Plateau Province, though apparently not found in historic times westward in Nigeria.

Tribal marks of the same pattern are worn by Katab proper, Ataka, Ikulu, Kagoro, Kaje, Kamantan, and Moroa: for a man, these consist of 41 vertical scars across the forehead, nine on each cheek, and a fringe of 24 tiny cuts along the edge of the jaw; they are similar for a woman, but number 55, 17, and 26 respectively. In addition women receive intricate markings on chest, abdomen, and back. According to Meek (1931) "boys commonly refuse to be marked" to-day; the position as regards women is not clearly stated, but adult women attending the Kafanchan market in 1949–50 with very few exceptions had the markings described. There is no clear information regarding the markings used, if any, by Jaba, Kachichere, Kagoma, and Kaninkon. Early investigators ascribe the invention of these marks to the Katab proper.

(iv) *Social Organization: Marriage Customs*

Katab practices do not clearly distinguish the members of the Group from certain of their neighbours (especially the peoples of the Kauru hills, the Chawai, Irigwe, Kadara, even—according to D. A. Percival—the Shuwalbe and Buli tribes of Fulani in the area, among others); but the practices outlined below are apparently universal among members of the Group, with the possible exception of Kaninkon, about whom no information is available.

(*a*) *Secondary Marriage Constituting Serial Polyandry:* A virgin goes to live as a wife with a man who has made customary payments and performed farm-labour for her parents. After a period fixed by public opinion as decorous, she may leave her first (primary) husband to live with another man, who has secretly won her favour and secured by payments to her parents rights over children which she may bear him: she is, thus, his wife in every sense, but her primary marriage has not been dissolved, and she may, in due course, return to her primary husband. In theory, she may add indefinitely to the number of her husbands, circulating among them, living with each in turn for as long as she chooses (but never less than the fixed period); in practice, however, the number is usually small, and a woman may

[7] Wooden head-trays are used elsewhere, most notably by near neighbours of the Katab peoples on the High Plateau, but patterns differ radically from the Katab.

[8] Namely, Katab proper, according to Meek in *Northern Tribes*, though he fails to mention the subject in *Tribal Studies*, Moroa, according to Temple, and Kaje, according to Reynolds.

3: Temple G-4 (no date)1922 FF38 Katab FF38
Kagoro

be divided into three, but otherwise there is no variation. The pigment used is from the unripe kernel of the gaude (*Gardenia thumbergia*). The face is, moreover, ornamented with beads, tin or coloured earth. They seldom wash, if ever. Men wear triangular tanned leather loin-coverings, or a skin which hangs from one shoulder to the back of the knee, the front legs being tied together loosely so that its owner may easily shift it to protect the exposed side of his body. This is usually made of goat-skin on which the hair is left. Hats made of plaited palm-fibres are also frequently worn. A cape made of palm leaves is used by both sexes as a protection against rain. None but Chiefs under Government wear cloth, and these have Haussa tobes.

Youths generally shave their heads, except for a broad ridge of hair from the forehead to the nape of the neck. No shaving is done during harvest time, but at other seasons the men from time to time shave off their moustaches, but usually wear a beard.

The tribal marks are the same for both sexes and are inflicted at certain epochs in their lives—the boys have their foreheads scarified when they are able to hoe. A girl has her chest and back marked on reaching marriageable age, and her forehead when she goes to her husband. In old days the marks consisted of irregular cuts on the forehead only, but two generations ago a skilful Katab operator invented a pattern which has been adopted by Kagoro, Attaka, Moroa and Kajji, as well as by his own people. It consists of numerous short perpendicular cuts along the forehead from ear to ear, and thirteen or more long slanting lines on each cheek from ear to chin. The incisions are painted with soot.

The customs of the above-mentioned neighbouring tribes have many points of similarity, and the language of the Kagoro is similar to that of the Attakka and Moroa, and resembles that of the Katab and Kajji. Haussa is spoken by a few individuals only.

It has been suggested that, in common with the Attakka, the Kagoro own Bauchi as their country of origin, that a long while ago they migrated to Nimbia—in South Nassarawa—and thence to their present location. In matters of dress, tribal marks, architecture, customs and language they show, however, obvious affinity to the Katab and Kajji tribes in the north-west, who trace their migrations from the north.

They have always retained their independence, though they suffered defeats at the hands of the Kajji and from the Filane of Jemaa. They would, however, probably have been conquered by the latter had not a Filane mallam foreseen in a dream that whoever should subjugate them would die.